

List of Current Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1 - 13 (Cancelled).

14. (Currently Amended) A method for monitoring a field device connected via a ~~database~~ data bus with a control unit, comprising the steps of:

requesting at intervals in time, an individual identifier of the field device; ~~and~~

comparing the requested individual identifier with an identifier stored in the control unit, for preventing unauthorized tampering with the field device; and

producing an alarm or a warning, in the case of a change in the requested individual identifier.

15. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 14, wherein: the individual identifier is the serial number of the field device.

16. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 14, wherein: the individual identifier is a key in the device firmware of the field device.

17. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein: the individual identifier is a test sum of a memory unit in the field device.

18. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 14, further comprising the step of:

storing the requested individual identifier in a database, along with a time stamp.

19. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein: a storing in the database only occurs, when a change is detected in the requested individual identifier.

Claim 20 (Cancelled).

21. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim ~~[[20]]~~ 14, wherein:

the alarm or warning is only produced, when the change occurs outside of a specified time period for maintenance.

22. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim ~~[[20]]~~ 14, wherein: the alarm or warning is presented at the control unit.

23. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim ~~[[20]]~~ 14, wherein: the alarm or warning is sent in electronic form (~~e.g. eMail, SMS, fax~~).

24. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim ~~[[20]]~~ 14, wherein:

the alarms or warnings are retrievable at the control unit.

25. (Currently Amended) The method as claimed in claim ~~[[20]]~~ 14, wherein: the alarms or warnings can be retrieved via a client (~~e.g. Internet Explorer~~).

26. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The method for monitoring a field device connected via a ~~data bus~~ data bus with a control unit, comprising the steps of:

directing a query by the control unit to the field device in intervals of time, the query requires an answer from the field device; and

in case no answer comes from the field device, such fact is stored in a data base along with a corresponding time stamp

27. (New) The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein: the electronic form is one of: email; SMS; and fax.

28. (New) The method as claimed in claim 25, wherein:

the alarms or warnings can be retrieved via Internet Explorer.